

Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women  
Quarterly Meeting  
July 27, 2007  
College of St Mary,  
Omaha, NE

**Commissioners present:** Kathy McKillip, Jolanda Junge-Kuzma, Teresa Maxwell, John Nejad, Betty Reeg, Barb Micek, Bernadette Esposito

**Commissioners absent:** Anne Hobbs, Jennifer Gutierrez, Kathy Bradley, Charlene Hirsh, Megan Lucas, Barb McPhillips

**Government liaison present:** Liz Hruska, Legislative Council

**Guest:** Marvel Welch, Nebraska Women's Foundation

**\*\* Call to order** at 9:07AM by Chairwoman McKillip.

**\*\* Notification of Public Notice:** She informed those present that Public Notices of the NCSW quarterly meeting had been placed in the Omaha World Herald and the Lincoln Journal Star. It was likewise posted electronically on the NCSW website and on the State of Nebraska's official government website for public meetings. Copies of the Public Notice were available at the meeting.

**\*\* Roll call** was taken by Bernadette Esposito who served as interim secretary in lieu of Anne Hobbs who could not attend.

**\*\* Approval of April 27 minutes:** There were two proposed changes to the minutes. Teresa Maxwell clarified that the New Business item about the Ponca Tribe efforts on behalf of girls should emphasize their promotion of education rather than on domestic violence and abuse. Betty Reeg indicated that her motion regarding Jennifer Gutierrez's resignation as Co-interim director was accepted *with regret* and she wanted the minutes to reflect that sentiment.

**MOTION:** By Bernadette Esposito to accept the April 27 minutes with above amendments.

**SECOND:** Jolanda Junge-Kuzma

**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor with Chair abstaining

**\*\* Approval of May 30 minutes:** There was one proposed change to the minutes. Jolanda indicated that Icey's name was misspelled as Icy.

**MOTION:** By Jolanda Junge-Kuzma to approve the May 30 minutes with the above amendment.

**SECOND:** Teresa Maxwell

**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor with Chair abstaining

**\*\* Review of Group Memory** from Strategic Planning Retreat: Attendance should reflect that Anne Hobbs was present and Diane Longo was absent. Also the sentence regarding the letter-writing assignment given to Bernadette Esposito on page 7 should be removed since it is in the wrong section of the plan.

**\*\*Approval of the Agenda:**

MOTION: By Kathy McKillip to approve the agenda as distributed

SECOND: Betty Reeg

Vote: Unanimous in favor with Chair abstaining

**\*\* Financial Report:** John Nejad reported that the Fiscal Year ended on June 30. Any funds unused by that point are gone. Any purchase orders should have been turned in by that date. However, funds from biennium years 2005-2007 that have been encumbered by either an invoice or a purchase order prior to June 30, 2007 can be used. This would include the laptops, projector, office supplies and possibly the Legal Rights Handbooks. Jolanda said these bills will be paid out in September 2007 and all other funds would no longer be available.

As of July 1, 2007 and until June 30, 2009, the NCSW is allocated only \$12,500/year. These funds are restricted to travel (mileage) only for Commission business. Liz Hruska clarified that these funds can also be used for meals but ONLY if a Commissioner leaves home by 7:00AM and does not return until 7:00PM. Jolanda encouraged all Commissioners to submit their mileage to attend the meetings as proof that we are meeting in accord with state statute.

- Discussion regarding some outstanding bills for printing of the English and Spanish Legal Rights Handbooks. Accounting is working with Jolanda to settle this.
- The State paid Lisa Good the vacation pay she claimed.
- Jolanda said that per Accounting's instructions, she is now doing a monthly audit for the purpose of internal checks and balances

**\*\*Introduction of Guest:** Kathy McKillip presented Marvel Welch from the Nebraska Women's Foundation. Marvel said she was pleased to attend our meeting and reminded all present that the Foundation has been a long-standing friend of the NCSW. She stated that although their funds are currently depleted, they were interested in knowing the new direction that NCSW was undertaking and if there would be specific projects that they could review and, if approved by the Foundation, potentially raise funds for.

**\*\* Interim Director's Report:** Jolanda Junge-Kuzma updated all present with details of the sorting, packing, and move out of the Ferguson House into the new storage "office", F-4! The rent for the storage facility has been paid for one year. A data base has been set up with the entire inventory recorded so that it can be located if needed.

- Jolanda distributed a list of current Commissioners and asked for any updates or changes to the contact information, such as new phone numbers or email addresses.
- Peggy King in the Governor's office has been in contact to seek guidance from the Commissioners as to new appointments to the NCSW. It was suggested by the

Governor's office that the decision be based on potential statute changes—such as appointments possibly being made according to congressional districts rather than the current Supreme Court districts and also reducing the number of commissioners who serve. Since there are a couple openings for commissioners outside of Lincoln and Omaha, Jolanda will continue to communicate with the Governor's office regarding this matter.

- Recent resignation letters to the Governor from Commissioners have been very supportive of the NCSW and the challenges of the current situation but express regret that the time commitment involved requires more than they can give at this time. Interest in keeping apprised of the NCSW's activities.

**\*\* Unfinished Business: Kathy McKillip**

- The Annual Report is complete and copies were passed out to members.
- "Traveling Office Tubs" were also distributed to all members so that all Commission-related paperwork, binders, etc would be easily accessible and portable for future presentations.
- Discussion about the Women of Distinction Award and the Nebraska Heroine Award: clear guidelines need to be formulated as to assessment criteria in addition to pertinence to the changing goals and mission of the NCSW.
- Discussion regarding nominating former NCSW commissioner and ex-officio chair Jamie Snyder to the Nebraska Women's Foundation.

MOTION: By Jolanda Junge-Kuzma to nominate Jamie Snyder to the Nebraska Women's Foundation

SECOND: Bernadette Esposito

VOTE: Unanimous in approval with the Chair abstaining.

- Discussion regarding a structured plan for distribution of the Legal Rights Handbooks: Jolanda located the file with information on where they were given out in the past. Jennifer Gutierrez and Jolanda will organize the distribution.
- Discussion regarding the revision and updating of the statutes and by-laws: law school interns are interested in helping with this project. Teresa Maxwell and Bernadette Esposito will be contacting Women's Commissions in other states about their statutes and by-laws as well as their "survival skills" with state funding. They will have completed those contacts by August 31 and will forward pertinent information to Anne Hobbs.
- Connections project: must be small and focused given our lack of funds as well as limited time and numbers. Suggestion to see Displaced Dreams through to its completion before beginning any new project other than the "internal" work on the by-laws and statutes and development of a strong, sustainable strategic plan.
- Discussion as to membership of the NCSW *as a Commission* in WomenWork!  
MOTION: By Jolanda Junge-Kuzma to not renew NCSW membership *as a Commission* in WomenWork! and to request removal of NCSW members contact information from all WomenWork! websites.

SECOND: Teresa Maxwell

In follow-up discussion, Teresa stated that she had sent a letter to the WomenWork! National office on June 9, 2007 requesting removal of all NCSW members' names and contact information from their websites. Apparently this has

not happened. She offered to write a second letter.

MOTION REVISION: Jolanda amended her motion to not renew NCSW membership *as a Commission* in WomenWork! and to request immediate removal of all NCSW members contact information from all WomenWork! national and local websites.

VOTE: Unanimous in approval with Chair abstaining.

**\*\* Displaced Dreams:** Barb Micek received congratulations from all present for the awards that her project has won! It won Second Place from the Nebraska Press Association for its vision in capturing the plight of women and increasing awareness of the challenges so many are faced with these days. It subsequently placed first in the Nebraska Press Women's contest which made the project eligible for competition at the national level. Displaced Dreams placed first in the National Federation of Press Women competition and Barb will travel to Richmond, VA in September for her much-deserved award!

**\*\* New Business:** Extensive discussion as to potential name change for the Commission and a new mission statement to reflect 21<sup>st</sup> century reality.

- What are our goals? Talking points: a) Improve the lives of NE women and families; b) Enhance the quality of life for all Nebraskans by promoting equal opportunities for women and their families; c) Promote those opportunities for NE women and families through outreach, education, research and referral.
- Mission statement: To enhance the quality of life for all Nebraskans by promoting equality of opportunity for Nebraska's women and families through Research, Outreach, Awareness, Referral.
- MOTION: By Jolanda Junge-Kuzma to approve the above as the new mission statement for the Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women.  
SECOND: Teresa  
VOTE: Unanimous in approval with the Chair abstaining
- Discussion of options for name change for the Commission—will revisit that at another time.
- Discussion regarding regular meetings with senators beginning in Fall 2007. Commissioners will divide up the visits. Teresa suggested considering a town hall style format with our senators.
- List of statewide organizations that are concerned with women and families that was compiled by Rebecca will be divided up amongst Commissioners with the goal of establishing partnerships and lasting communications with them. An introductory letter will be drafted.
- Discussion as to capabilities of Commissioners to monitor legislation introduced as to its impact on women and families and to track their progress.
- Detailed discussion regarding fund raising, sponsoring events or participating with other organizations (such as the Women and Money Conference this month), the "usability" of the NCSW cash fund, grant monies from the NE Women's Foundation and other foundations supportive of women and families.

- Essential for all Commissioners to maintain contact with each other and with the members of the Executive Committee. Kathy will send out weekly updates to all members.
- Bernadette will make a “TO DO” list for the Commissioners based on the recommendations mentioned in the minutes.

**\*\* Audit Committee:** Jolanda proposed that the NCSW create an Audit Committee that would take the place of the Finance Committee. Accounting had suggested the benefits of doing this. John, Jolanda and Betty expressed interest in serving on the new Audit Committee.

**MOTION:** By Jolanda Junge-Kuzma to create an Audit Committee to take the place of the Finance Committee.

**SECOND:** John Nejad

**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor with the Chair abstaining.

**\*\* Thank you to Jolanda!** Members recognized Jolanda for the months of hard work, organizing and agonizing, phone calling and arranging that was involved in relocating the NCSW from the Ferguson House to F-4 as well as for her dedication to maintaining the integrity of the NCSW in dealing with the governor’s office and other state agencies.

**\*\* Message from guest Marvel Welch:** She said she was energized by what she saw and heard. She has a good understanding of the challenges we face but also a better idea of where we are going. She was very grateful for the opportunity to be present at our meeting and will give a positive report to the Nebraska Women’s Foundation at their meeting next week. Members expressed their thanks to her for her interest and presence all day as well as the desire of the NCSW to continue our association with the Foundation.

**\*\* Adjournment:** 2:09PM

**MOTION:** Betty Reeg

**SECOND:** John Nejad

Approval by consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernadette Esposito